

# THE MIDDEN

Publication of the Archaeological Society of British Columbia

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# The Midden

Publication of the Archaeological Society of British Columbia

**Editor:** Kathryn Bernick

Submissions and exchange publications should be directed to the Editor. Contributions on subjects germane to B.C. archaeology are welcomed: maximum length 1,500 words, no footnotes, and only a brief bibliography (if necessary at all). Guidelines available.

The next issue of *The Midden* will appear mid-October 1991.

**Contributors this issue:** Brian Apland, Kathryn Bernick, Norm Easton, Grant Keddie, Phyllis Mason, Terry Spurgeon.

**Production Assistants:** Vicki Feddema, Phyllis Mason, Barbara Stopa.

**THE COVER:** ASBC-Victoria members Joseph Baur and Louise Baycroft screening the midden under the Tillicum bridge. See article on South Gorge Bridge site, on pages 6-7.

**Subscriptions and Mailing:** Helmi Braches

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## The Society

The **Archaeological Society of British Columbia** is dedicated to the protection of archaeological resources and the spread of archaeological knowledge.

Meetings featuring illustrated lectures are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) at 8:00 p.m. in the Vancouver Museum Auditorium. Visitors and new members are welcome!

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**Affiliated Chapters:**

**Fraser Valley.** Meetings featuring illustrated lectures are held on the third Tuesday of each month (September to May) at 7:45 p.m. on the Fraser Valley College campus in Abbotsford. President: Thelma McIntyre (853-1495). Membership Secretary: Andy Purdy (823-4920).

**NEXT MEETING:**

September 11      Topic to be announced.

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# Archaeology Under the Water at Montague Harbour

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by Norm Easton

*ERODED MIDDEN* deposits are ubiquitous along the island coasts of the Strait of Georgia. Anyone taking the ferry from Vancouver to Victoria sees the splashes of white shell beaches dotting the shorelines among the bedrock. Visitors as well as residents of the Gulf Islands quickly come to realize that there is not a single beach that does not display midden deposits in varying degrees of decay and exposure.

Most of us know that these shells represent the accumulation of the remains of prehistoric dinners by British Columbia's first peoples. Many of us worry at their exposure, as these archaeological deposits contain not just clam shells, but a whole range of material evidence of an ancient way of life. We know that discovery and analysis of this evidence can enrich our appreciation of the complex adaptations of past lifeways. Concern for the apparent loss of these archaeological sites may grow when we realize that in the Gulf Islands, no coastal sites at all seem to have

survived from the mid-Holocene, about 4000 to 8000 years ago.

But, are they lost, or just misplaced? What has really happened to these shoreline sites?

I believe two things have happened. The first is apparent — coastal midden sites *have* eroded away. From an archaeological point of view, however, they are not destroyed, merely redeposited elsewhere. The challenge is to determine where and to learn to interpret what we might find. The excavation and interpretation of "secondary deposits," that is, archaeological remains outside of their original "primary" context, is in fact far more the norm than most people realize (and perhaps more than most archaeologists admit). The majority of sites (except very recent or enclosed ones) are exposed to the effects of weather, water, animals, and humans; effects that mix up the evidence, so to speak. Archaeology is the detective work that tries to put the pieces

back together again. In this sense, sites are not lost, only transformed.

The second thing that I believe has happened to our coastal archaeological sites is not at all apparent, but completely sensible upon reflection — many coastal archaeology sites are not visible because they have become overburdened by sediments.

"Of course," you say, "that is why archaeologists dig in the earth."

"No," I respond. "That is why archaeologists must dive in the sea."

The "disappearance" of coastal middens is only partly due to erosion. I believe that the most significant single factor affecting the location of shoreline middens, particularly during the mid-Holocene, is the cumulative effect of post-glacial sea level rise. That is to say, the coastal sites from this period are located not on the present-day coast, but along the

coast that was in existence at the time of their occupation — a paleo-shoreline. If one considers the relative sea-level curve of the Gulf Islands, the reason why there are so few mid-Holocene sites in the region becomes apparent — they would have been located on shorelines some 3-10 m below the modern shoreline.

Partly with these thoughts in mind, I began to investigate the intertidal and submarine zones offshore from the big midden at Montague Harbour (*DfRu 13*). This site had been excavated by Dr. Donald Mitchell in the 1960s. He identified three cultural units at *DfRu 13*: Gulf of Georgia, Marpole, and Locarno Beach. He also noted that the lowest deposits on-shore extend below the high-tide water table, and that considerable erosion of the shore-face of the midden seemed to have occurred, resulting in redeposition of midden materials along the beach.

More recently, in 1989, Morley Eldridge conducted a site boundary survey of *DfRu 13*. A core sample of the beach sediments led him to suggest that along with mixed secondary midden deposits, some portions of the intertidal beach area contained "undisturbed cultural deposits."

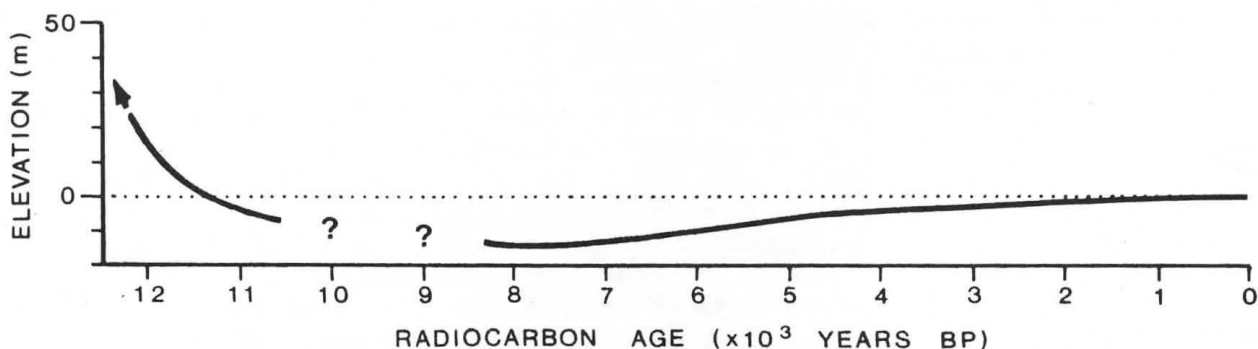
For some years, I had been deliberating where to launch field investigations of paleo-shorelines

and, for a variety of reasons, Montague Harbour rose to the top of the list. Eldridge's cores nailed it there, and with the support of the BC Archaeology Branch and the Underwater Archaeological Society of BC, I spent three days excavating a small test pit offshore, in October 1989.

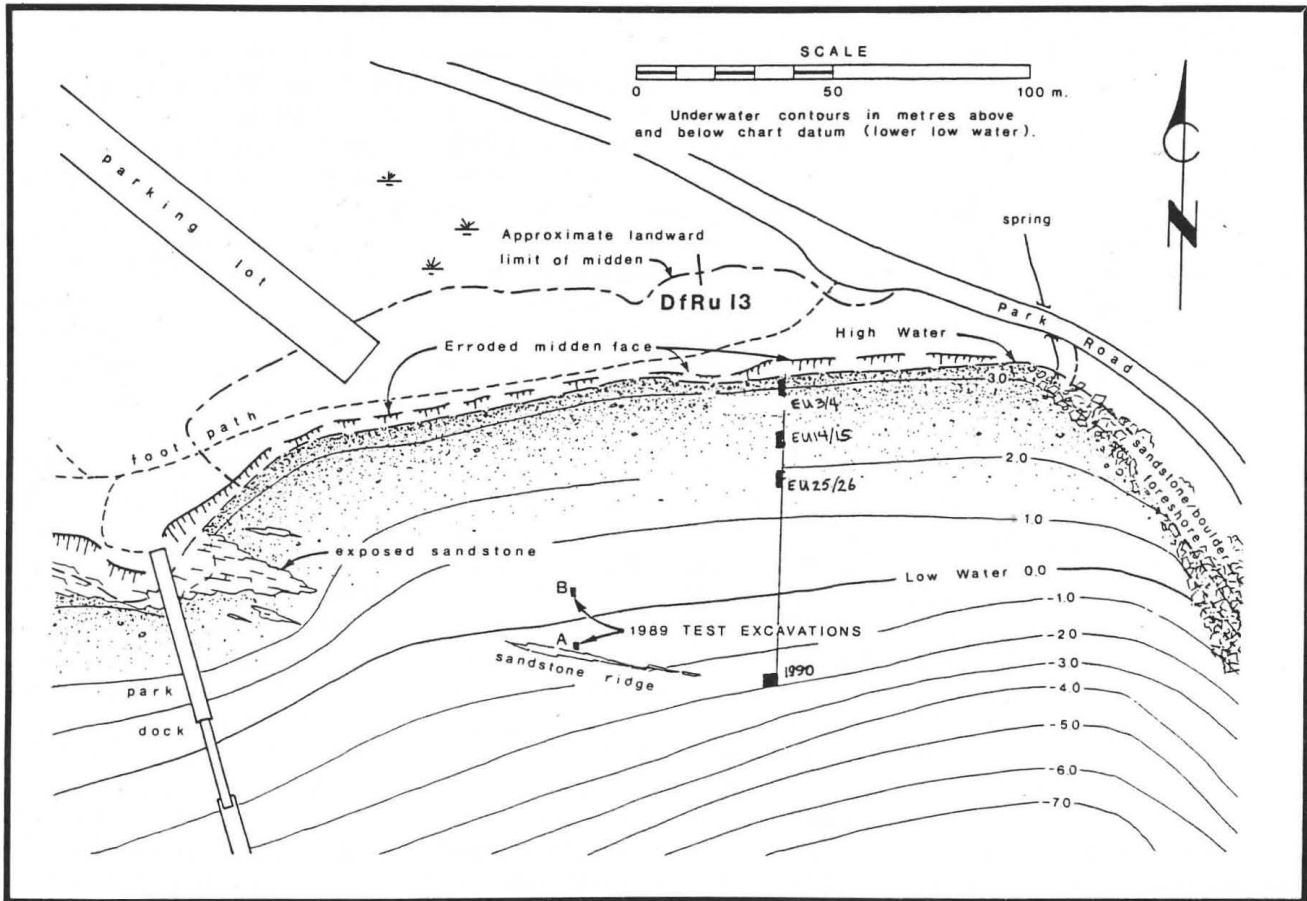
The results of this short field excursion were equivocal. A number of possible lithic artifacts were recovered, but they were very waterworn, and the tell-tale characteristics of human use were not obvious. More intriguing were the faunal remains, which included burned mammal bones.

Although a start had been made, three days was hardly enough time to address the problem. The BC Heritage Trust recognized this and agreed to fund three weeks of fieldwork in 1990. Andrew Mason, in the October 1990 *Midden* [Vol.22, No.4:6-7], discussed the public participation aspects of this fieldwork; here I focus on the archaeological methods and initial findings.

The research strategy, developed as the beginning of a close examination of the effects of sea-level rise and erosion on coastal deposits, had three components. One was to collect a series of sediment cores in order to ascertain the geological evidence for the timing and rate of sea-level change in the Montague Harbour basin,



*Approximate sea level curve for the Victoria and Gulf Islands area, based on geological cores.*



*Intertidal and submarine excavation units at the Montague Harbour site, DfRu 13.*

and to seek out likely areas where cultural deposits might be found. Another was to undertake controlled excavation of the intertidal zone. By beginning at the basal level of the shoreside stratified midden deposits, we hoped to trace the limit of their integrity seaward and identify some effects of tidal inundation. Finally, if the cores or the intertidal excavations supported it, we planned to excavate within the submarine zone. The results of these undertakings are still being analyzed, but there are a number of interesting findings that I can comment on.

A number of cores show clear evidence of sea-level rise. The most convincing is a core that was collected at about the low-tide level from a beach close to *DfRu 13*. The

stratigraphy of the core shows a basal clay level, followed by a layer of what seem to be aerated soils that are in turn overlaid by marine sands. The transition from soils to sands has been radiocarbon dated to  $1900 \pm 80$  BP on marine shell (not calibrated). Several other cores from the area show similar stratigraphy, and we hope to further date and correlate the transgressive events they document in order to gain a clearer understanding of the nature and rate of sea-level changes within the region.

Three major units within the intertidal area were excavated offshore from *DfRu 13*: one (EU3/4) at the high tide line, one (EU14/15) 7 m below this, and another (EU25/26) 13 m seaward of the high tide line. The first two of these excavations revealed considerable stratigraphic complexity and are

evidently generally unaltered midden deposits, whereas the lowest unit had a relatively simple stratigraphy consisting of only three identifiable strata. All of the units bottomed out at a stiff clay interface, which may represent alluvial sediments deposited during periods of high sea level at the very end of the Pleistocene. As well, they all contained stone artifacts, fire-cracked rocks, charcoal, and a complex assemblage of faunal remains (including intertidal bivalves, fish, and land and sea mammals). Two dates have been processed for the intertidal area. The basal levels of EU3/4 have been dated to  $900 \pm 60$  BP (on charcoal) and the lower levels of EU14/15 have been dated to  $1860 \pm 70$  (on marine shell). This places the upper intertidal deposits within the Gulf of Georgia culture type, whereas

the middle intertidal deposits may be either Marpole or Gulf of Georgia (calibration of the shell date will decrease the estimated age by at least several hundred years).

The submarine excavation took place about 80 m offshore, approximately 2.5 m below the low tide chart datum. Using an airlift, a 1.5x2 m area was excavated to a depth of nearly 80 cm. Under about 10 cm of fine marine sediments lay a dense accumulation of whole and broken clam shells, principally horse and butter clam, as well as littleneck and bentnose clams, scallop, whelk, mussel, cockle, barnacle, rock scallop, and land and sea mammal remains. Eleven lithic artifacts were recovered from the submarine unit; all are flakes, and four show distinct signs of retouch and utilization. Considerable numbers of barnacle-encrusted fire-cracked rocks were recovered from the lower levels of the excavation.

I cannot say whether these are primary, secondary, or otherwise altered deposits. Certainly, the upper levels have been subject to some bio-turbation, or the mixing of the sediments through biological activities of worms and clams. But the lower levels, with their density of shell remains, fire-cracked rocks, barnacles, and artifacts, suggest that these may be inundated cultural deposits.

We were unable to complete the excavation of this unit to the basal clays before our field season ended. Before we left, however, we took another core of the remainder of the unit, and it revealed that the shell deposits extend down another 80 cm above the clays. A marine-shell date from the bottom of the core gave an age of  $6280 \pm 90$  BP.

Palynological, faunal, and sedimentological analyses of the data

recovered from these excavations are ongoing. They are geared toward generating a greater understanding of the context of the artifacts that were recovered. The principal question is, of course, whether these are primary or secondary deposits, and, if secondary, can they be made to "tell a story" through analysis.

I am afraid the answer to these questions is not readily apparent. We need to do more fieldwork and to collect more data. In particular, we have to come to a better understanding of the effects of marine organisms on such deposits. From a practical view, we need to gain even better stratigraphic and sampling control within the underwater environment, increase our excavation productivity, and continue to develop the special labour skills needed for carrying out underwater excavation.

Nevertheless, with the detailed archaeological investigations of our underwater environment at Montague Harbour, BC archaeology has finally got its feet wet. As I've argued before, with the long-standing importance of maritime adaptations along the west coast, I hope that we will see continuing growth in such forms of research. The development of underwater archaeology by investigating near-shore prehistoric deposits will one day place us in a position to understand the deep-water deposits that may hold proof of the "coastal migration" theory. □

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*Norm Easton is a ASBC member who resides in Whitehorse where he is Lecturer in Anthropology at Yukon College.*

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**Brian Thom**, a UBC undergraduate student in anthropology-archaeology (and an ASBC member) won the Canadian Archaeological Association's annual student paper competition with an entry titled "An Investigation of Inter-Assemblage Variability within the Gulf of Georgia Phase." The award consists of a \$500 prize and publication in the *Canadian Journal of Archaeology*. Honourable mention — but no money — went to **Kevin Berry**, an undergraduate archaeology student at SFU, for a paper titled "Where Have All the Salmon Run? Radiographic Examination of Salmon Remains from Keatley Creek in the Upper Fraser Canyon." . . . **Diane Kay Hanson** recently defended her PhD dissertation (Dept. of Archaeology, SFU) — *Late Prehistoric Subsistence in the Strait of Georgia Region of the*

*Northwest Coast*. . . Another faunal study of interest is **Virginia L. Butler's** PhD dissertation, completed in 1990 at the Univ. of Washington (Dept. of Anthropology) — *Distinguishing Natural from Cultural Salmonoid Deposits in Pacific Northwest North America*. . . **Jeff Hunston** has updated his bibliography of non-technical publications *Prehistory of Canada: Recommended General Introductory Reading* (4th ed., 1991). For copies write to him at the Yukon Heritage Branch, Dept. of Tourism, PO Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6 . . . Conference goers who like to plan ahead, note that the **Canadian Archaeological Association's** 1992 annual meeting (in late April or early May) will be held in London, Ontario, followed by Montreal in 1993, and tentatively Edmonton in 1994. The **Society for**

**Historical Archaeology** will meet in Vancouver in January 1994 . . . If you prefer exotic locations, VCC-Langara is investigating the feasibility of a tour (probably next spring) to archaeological sites in Africa, and **Simon Fraser University** is contemplating holding its 1992 archaeology field school in Tonga. . . . UBC's **R.G. Matson** gets to go this summer, but only to Utah where he'll be investigating Basketmaker II sites on Cedar Mesa. . . . On July 1, 1991 **Richard Pearson** assumes the position of Head of the Dept. of Anthropology and Sociology at UBC . . . Anyone who still hasn't seen the UBC Museum of Anthropology's travelling exhibit *Blood from Stone: Making and Using Stone Tools in Prehistoric British Columbia*, can catch it at the **Richmond Museum** between August 5 and September 20, 1991.

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## Alberta places first

*THE CALGARY HERALD* published both winners of the Canadian Archaeological Association's 1990 public writing award competition.

Mark Lowey won in the newspaper category for his article titled "Frozen in Time: Norse America? Explorers Left Calling Cards 500 Years before Columbus" (*Calgary Herald*, Feb. 2, 1990).

The magazine/journal award went to Lisabeth Church for "Digging into the Past" (*Calgary Herald Magazine*, Nov. 18, 1990).

Each receives a \$350 prize and a commemorative plaque. There was no award this year in the professional/institutional category.

The annual CAA public writing award acknowledges outstanding contributions that further public

understanding and appreciation of Canadian archaeology. Submissions for the next competition must be published during 1991 in a Canadian newspaper, magazine, or journal of wide circulation, and they must be at least 1000 words long. For further information contact Margaret Bertulli, Prince of Wales Heritage Centre, Yellowknife, NWT, X1A 2L9; tel: (403) 920-8084. □

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## Workshops attract visitors

*SCHOOL CHILDREN* from the 100 Mile House area had a unique opportunity last month to participate in a week-long Native cultural

program that included workshops in archaeology.

Consulting archaeologist Sandra Zacharias and UVic archaeology student Clinton Coates demonstrated excavation techniques, supervised mapping activities, and explained archaeological conservation to small groups of students from two elementary schools. All together, 65 children in grades 4-7 took part.

The May 13-17 *Getting Together* program on the Canim Lake Reserve featured many Shuswap cultural activities led by teachers and band members. The archaeology component, Zacharias told *The Midden*, was extremely popular — it drew more than 500 visitors, as well as all the local media. □



by Grant Keddie

*The Gorge narrows at mid-tide. Large shell midden sites are located on each side of the Tillicum Bridge.*

## Spirit Divers and Spirited Diggers

*THE PICTURESQUE* Gorge narrows near Victoria is a place where native Songhees dove deep into the water to gain special spirit powers. Here, at the beginning of time, Halys the transformer-being turned a young girl named Camossung into stone. Her name survives today as Camosun College and Camosun Street.

Just above the reversible falls caused by the shifting tides, members of the Victoria chapter of the Archaeological Society of B.C. dig into the oldest recorded shell midden on southern Vancouver Island.

Two years ago, a small area of the South Gorge Bridge shell midden (*DcRu 5*) was exposed during construction of a walkway under-

neath the Tillicum Road bridge. Below a thick shell layer, I observed a dark layer of midden with sparse shell, and I extracted a soil sample to date the charcoal it contained. To my surprise, the radiocarbon assay dates the layer to 4120 years ago!

This April, the municipality of Esquimalt had planned to build another walkway through the cultural deposits. I obtained an impact assessment permit from the Archaeology Branch, and the ASBC-Victoria emergency response team under the leadership of Joseph Baur swung into action. We excavated one test pit with undisturbed cultural deposits and began several others where cultural deposits proved to be disturbed or non-existent.

The upper, shell zone contained mainly native oyster shells (formerly numerous in the Gorge waterway). Next in quantity were bent-nose clams (found locally in small mud bays) and bay mussels (like those on the rocks a few steps from the site today). We found a few basalt flakes and very small quantities of bone. The diggers grew excited over every herring vertebra — while anglers fishing from the bridge above pulled up herring after herring, getting far more bones than we did!

Finally, we got into the lower, dark zone and Joe found the kind of artifact I was hoping to see — the famous "whatsit," a small rectangular object made of steatite, with two holes in it. Since these



objects of unknown function (perhaps personal ornaments?) are not present in components dating from the past 1700 years, the find confirms an early age for the top of the dark zone.

A similar dark soil layer containing fire-broken rocks, sparse shell, and bone occurs at the Fleming Beach site (DcRu 20) on Esquimalt's southern shore. It sits several metres above the present shoreline and has a radiocarbon age estimate of 4151 years. The sample that yielded that date came from the deepest part of the Fleming Beach deposits (where an entire cross-section of the midden was exposed during house construction). At the South Gorge Bridge site, in contrast, we excavated another 60 cm of the lower zone without reaching bottom; the cultural deposits extend well below the dated layer and their base is probably 5000 (or more) years old.

Why do the oldest sites along the present shoreline date to this period? Why are there so few of them? One answer may relate to sea-level changes. Between about 9250 and 5000 years ago sea levels in this region were lower than today. For the period between 5000 and 2300 years ago, we don't know the location of the shoreline, though some suspect the sea was gradually rising, or fluctuating, during this time. The upper Gorge waterway was a fresh-water stream during the early occupation period of the South Gorge Bridge site, and this may account for the sparse amount of shell in the lower zone.

Interestingly, the oldest layers at three large, deep shoreline shell midden sites on the south end of Vancouver Island date to about 2800 years ago. The Willows Beach site (DcRt 10) in Oak Bay has a radiocarbon age of 2756 years, the Maplebank site (DcRu 12) in Esquimalt Harbour 2810 years, and

the Goodridge Peninsula site (DcRv 48) in Sooke Basin 2814 years. Maybe, 2800 years ago is the time when the sea stabilized at near its present level. The evidence from the South Gorge Bridge site may be an important factor in determining when the shoreline reached its present elevation and thus provide crucial information for interpreting why prehistoric human settlements occur where and when they do.

Fortunately, the walkway was redesigned to avoid damage to the site. After a formal presentation and with support from the heritage advisory and parks committees, Esquimalt municipal council enthusiastically agreed to protect the remaining portion of the midden. It is now enclosed in a

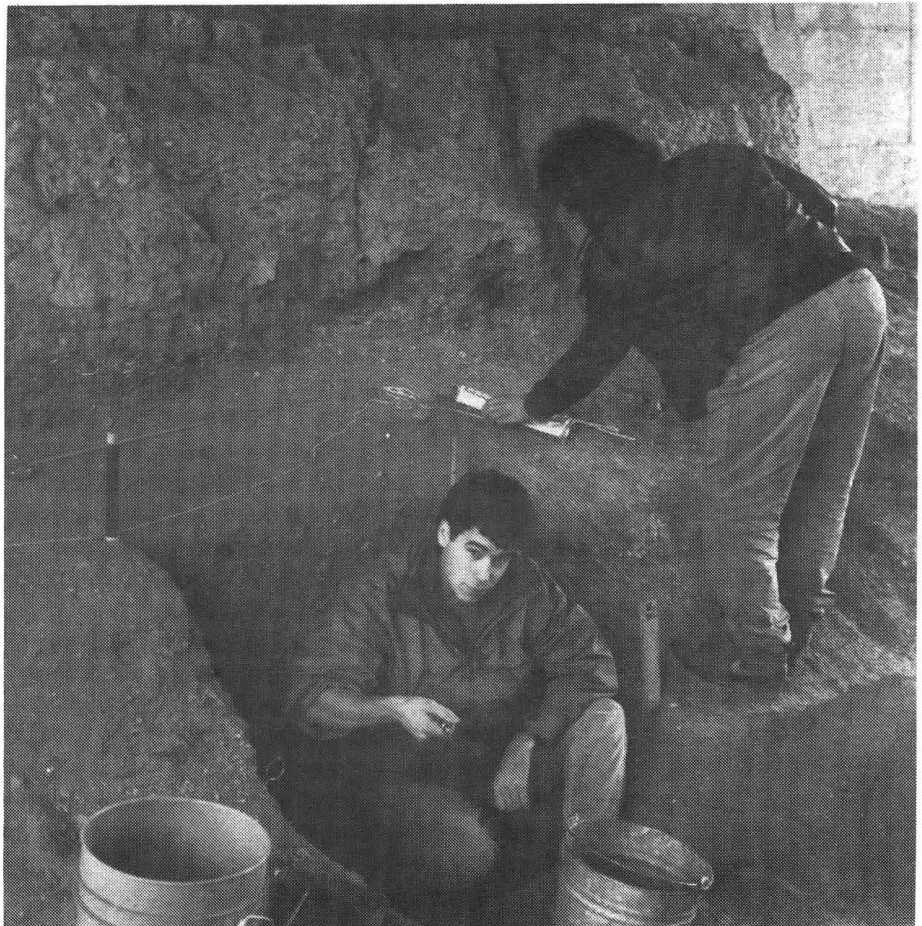
large cage that extends up to the underside of the bridge.

I dream of seeing the South Gorge Bridge site developed into a permanent outdoor exhibit with bright murals of native fishing activities instead of graffiti on the bridge wall, plasticized exposures of excavated midden faces, and attractive posters that explain the nature of the site. We will again see spirited diggers from the Archaeological Society uncovering the mysteries that this beautiful place offers to seekers of the power of knowledge. □

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*ASBC member Grant Keddie is an archaeology curator at the Royal BC Museum in Victoria.*

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*Steven Coe and John Somoggi-Csizmasia excavating at the South Gorge Bridge site.*

## Letter to the Editor:

I WAS VERY surprised to read your comments in the February 1991 edition of *The Midden* (Vol.23, No.1, p.4: "Archaeologists value trees") stating that "the Archaeology Branch does not accord culturally modified trees (CMTs) full status as heritage resources." That statement is certainly not correct.

The Archaeology Branch most assuredly considers CMTs to be important heritage resources. Indeed, various staff of the Archaeology Branch have worked for more than a decade to ensure these features are recognized and properly recorded.

CMTs are not automatically protected under the Heritage Conservation Act, but that is a function of the wording of the legislation and not any reflection of what the Branch considers as having full heritage resource status.

CMTs are not included in the provincial archaeological site file as a specific site type due to a lack of definition as to what constitutes the site in these cases. In 1983, the provincial archaeologist arranged a CMT workshop that 13 people interested in the subject attended. That included a representative of the Council of Haida Nations. The Archaeology Branch agreed to retain CMT records in a separate file until better definition of how to define a CMT site was developed.

Since that time, Branch staff have worked hard to ensure forest companies are aware of the importance of CMTs. A CMT recording form has been developed to complement the data-surveying undertaken by forestry engineers. Several companies continue to map and record CMTs and submit records to the Branch.

The Branch has also continuously supported CMT research and recording projects. I believe it would be fair to say that the vast majority of CMT-related studies undertaken in the past decade have been either supported, initiated, fully or partially funded by the Branch, or come about through the insistence of Branch staff.

It may be time that we re-examine the recording format of CMTs and certainly the new heritage legislation proposal will overcome existing legal limitations — but please do not imply to your readers that the Branch does not consider CMTs important as heritage resources.

**Brian Apland**  
*Director, Archaeology Branch*

### Volunteer Opportunities Montague Harbour Excavations

Further excavations are planned for Montague Harbour on Galiano Island this summer by Yukon College anthropologist and ASBC member Norm Easton. Operating under a grant from the BC Heritage Trust sponsored by the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia, Easton will continue his explorations of the intertidal and submarine deposits offshore from *DfRu 13*.

ASBC members are welcome to participate as volunteer field crew. More than a dozen ASBC members assisted the excavations last year, coming from as far away as Hazelton and Williams Lake for the opportunity to be part of a unique project that combines traditional land-based and underwater archaeology to locate prehistoric cultural deposits inundated by rising sea levels during the mid-Holocene.

You need not be a diver to participate, but you do have to pre-register in order to facilitate attendance scheduling and field-camp accommodation arrangements. The fieldwork period will run August 2-25, 1991. For more information and to register, contact Charles Moore (as soon as possible) at 275-5427.

## ASBC digs medical history

THE VICTORIA chapter of the ASBC is currently excavating an early historic garbage dump behind the Royal Jubilee hospital.

The project began when the Greater Victoria Hospital Society approached Victoria's heritage advisory committee to place the Pemberton Memorial Operating Room, built in 1896, on its heritage designation list. A new building will be constructed in an area that includes the location where the first hospital once stood. Norma Friedmann, the hospital facility planner, asked the committee (of which archaeologist Grant Keddie is

a member) whether someone could investigate the archaeological potential of the area. Keddie said that the Victoria Archaeological Society would love to get involved.

The Victoria ASBC — with a steadily growing membership — is now busily finding interesting artifacts associated with hospital activities in the 1890s. The Victoria Medical Society would like to see the old operating room transformed into a medical museum. The artifacts recovered by the ASBC will be turned over for display in this museum, but first, they will be described in a future issue of *The Midden*. □

## Federal bill needs work

THE PROPOSED archaeological protection act released last December by then federal Minister of Communications Marcel Masse has elicited considerable feedback. Elizabeth Snow, director of the Archaeology Policy Office in Ottawa, summarized the comments for a meeting of the Canadian Archaeological Association in Newfoundland last month.

Responses from Canadian archaeologists and archaeological groups express dissatisfaction with the proposed permit system (too complicated, too many restrictions) and with the exclusion of the Canadian Parks Service. Snow received many — sometimes contradictory — comments on details of administration, penalties, etc., and suggestions for a user-pay approach to impact assessment.

She expressed apprehension that the sparse response from divers and

underwater archaeology societies will emphasize concerns that did come in regarding proposed restrictions on underwater salvage rights.

Other government departments, Snow said, seem to be nervous about the costs of administering the program. Also, they voiced concerns about the proposed permit system and the still-to-be-determined interaction with the proposed federal Environmental Assessment Act.

The Archaeology Policy Office held a special symposium earlier this year to solicit feedback from the Native community. Snow highlighted issues raised by Native participants: ownership, jurisdiction, and control of archaeological resources; involvement of Native elders; the need for respect in dealing with aboriginal objects; the

limited scope of the proposed legislation, which deals with archaeological resources but not other aspects of aboriginal heritage. The symposium also suggested that archaeologists subscribe to a code of ethics.

Snow concluded that the consultation process has been constructive and reported that the various suggestions are now being dealt with. The next step will be to obtain authority from Cabinet to make changes to the draft legislation. The bill could be ready by this coming autumn, she said.

Whether the recent Cabinet shuffle, which moved Masse out of the Communications portfolio, will affect the process, remains to be seen. Snow expects that proposed amendments to the Cultural Property Export and Import Act will go ahead in any event. □

# Book Reviews

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## *A fine reference book*

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**Totem Poles**, by Hilary Stewart. 1990. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver. 192 pp., ill., ind., bibl. \$29.95 (hardcover).

*HILARY STEWART'S* quiet enthusiasm for Northwest Coast Native material culture has led to this new book about totem poles.

The book is divided into three sections. The first provides us with a cultural context for the poles, their various types, and how they were carved and raised.

Part two describes the animals and elements that are incorporated into each pole. There are also tips on how to differentiate among the artistic styles of each of the coast's cultural groups.

Part three, the longest section, presents the poles themselves. Arranged one to a page, the 113 poles span a geographic area from the Douglas border-crossing in the south to Juneau, Alaska in the north. As always with Hilary Stewart's books, excellent maps make site locations clear.

The text gives the locations, carvers, history, elements, and styles of the poles. Each description is illustrated by one of Stewart's wonderful drawings.

There is one glaring production error — the illustrations for poles 70 and 71, Sam and May Henderson's memorial poles, are switched.

Fortunately, such an error can be easily corrected in future editions.

Once again, Hilary Stewart has created a fine, fully accessible, reference book that will be of value to serious students and interested lay people alike for years to come. I am looking forward to her next project. □

— *Phyllis Mason*

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*ASBC member Phyllis Mason is a library technician who works at the VCC-Langara library.*

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## *Current and cohesive*

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**Handbook of North American Indians. Vol. 7: Northwest Coast**, edited by Wayne Suttles. 1990. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 777 pp., ill., bibl., index. \$65.00 (hardcover).

*BIG, COMPREHENSIVE*, informative, and readable — it's truly encyclopaedic.

The book begins with brief summaries of the environment, languages, human biology, and cultural antecedents of the Northwest Coast culture area. Next come six chapters on the history of research and another six on the history of contact.

The bulk of the volume consists of 38 chapters (more than 500

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pages) describing the aboriginal peoples of the western coast of North America, from Alaska to southern Oregon. At the end, there are three general chapters — on mythology, art, and the Indian Shaker Church. The respective contributions are mainly by academic anthropologists with expertise in the particular topic; several are by Native authors.

The production is as impressive as the breadth of content. The numerous attractive drawings and crisp black and white photographs add substance to the wealth of information in the text, and detailed maps give geographic location (though some site-distribution map-figures have been misinterpreted by the cartographer).

*Midden* readers might like to know that an article originally written for this volume by Charles Borden was published separately, in 1975, by the National Museums of Canada (*Early Prehistory of the Northwest Coast, ca. 11,000-5000 BP*, Mercury Series ASC paper 45). This is not mentioned in the introduction, which is unfortunate since its deletion from the **Northwest Coast** volume leaves some unexplained gaps (such as the Charles phase).

From an archaeological perspective, there are a few problems with

the volume, not least, the difficulty of finding the prehistory chapters.

Placing prehistory, traditional ethnography, and modern native culture in a single (geographical) sequence emphasizes cultural inter-relatedness and temporal continuity, but section divisions would facilitate reference use. Moreover, the key-map on page ix, which serves as a guide to the respective culture groups, does not indicate the archaeological areas.

Standardizing nomenclature inevitably provokes comment, though it is necessary in a book of this type. My complaint concerns the transformation of 'Gulf of Georgia culture type' to 'Strait of Georgia culture type.' Surely, if established archaeological phase names *must* be altered for editorial style requirements, suitable cross-references should be included to aid readers who look for further references.

These types of problems stem from the unwieldy nature of editing contributions by 59 scholars over a 20-year period. It was a gargantuan task, and Wayne Suttles must be commended for providing a current, cohesive anthropological view of Northwest Coast native cultures. The volume will be a classic general reference for years to come, and the wonderful

bibliography will endear it to scholars.

I recommend the **Northwest Coast** volume to everyone who likes to read about the peoples and cultures of this region, as well as to those who value ready access to reference material. □

— *Kathryn Bernick*

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*Midden* Editor Kathryn Bernick is an archaeologist based in Vancouver.

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## Look For...

*"Rocky Mountain Fort: Archaeological Research and the Late Eighteenth-century North West Company Expansion into British Columbia,"* by David Burley and Scott Hamilton. In **BC Studies** No.88 (Winter 1990-91), pp.3-20.

# Permits

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## Permits issued by the B.C. Archaeology Branch March through May 1991:

- 1991-20 Sandra Zacharias: monitoring and data recovery, Crescent Beach.
- 1991-21 Morley Eldridge: impact assessment, *DdRu 4*, North Saanich.
- 1991-22 Keary Walde: impact assessment, petroleum and natural gas well sites, pipelines, and related works in northeastern BC.
- 1991-23 Morley Eldridge: impact assessment, Ministry of Transportation and Highways proposed gravel quarry, Upper Campbell Lake, Comox District.
- 1991-24 Diana French: impact assessment, Okanagan Centre Regional District.
- 1991-25 Richard Brolly: impact assessment, Westbank.
- 1991-26 Richard Brolly: impact assessment, proposed condominium development, east shore of Okanagan Lake west of Vernon.
- 1991-27 Robert Muir: impact assessment, proposed water-main development in northern Williams Lake.
- 1991-28 Sylvia Albright: evaluative test excavation, vicinity of proposed Ure Creek logging road near Mount Currie.
- 1991-29 Leonard Ham: impact assessment, upgrade of Barnet Highway east of *DhRr 10*, Burnaby/Port Moody.
- 1991-30 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, Clonard Bay, Queen Charlotte District.
- 1991-31 Alan McMillan: inventory and testing, Toquaht territory, western Barkley Sound.
- 1991-32 Gordon Mohs: systematic data recovery, *DgRn 23*, Mission District Municipality.
- 1991-33 Morley Eldridge: monitoring and emergency impact management, natural gas pipeline, Oak Bay.
- 1991-34 Richard Brolly: impact assessment, proposed Coquitlam River flood control program, Coquitlam I.R. 2.
- 1991-35 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, BC Tel—Teleglobe Canada Ltd. light guide system, Vancouver and Galiano islands.
- 1991-36 Ian Wilson: inventory, proposed extension to Ure Creek logging haulroad and proposed cutblock, southwest Lillooet Lake.
- 1991-37 Sandra Zacharias: inventory and impact assessment, proposed subdivision, 103 Mile Lake, Lillooet District.
- 1991-38 Sandra Zacharias: inventory and impact assessment, Lac La Hache, Lillooet District.
- 1991-39 H. Krentz: burial recovery, *DfRt 15*, Galiano Island.
- 1991-40 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, Bearskin Bay, Queen Charlotte Islands.

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## Visit a Dig...

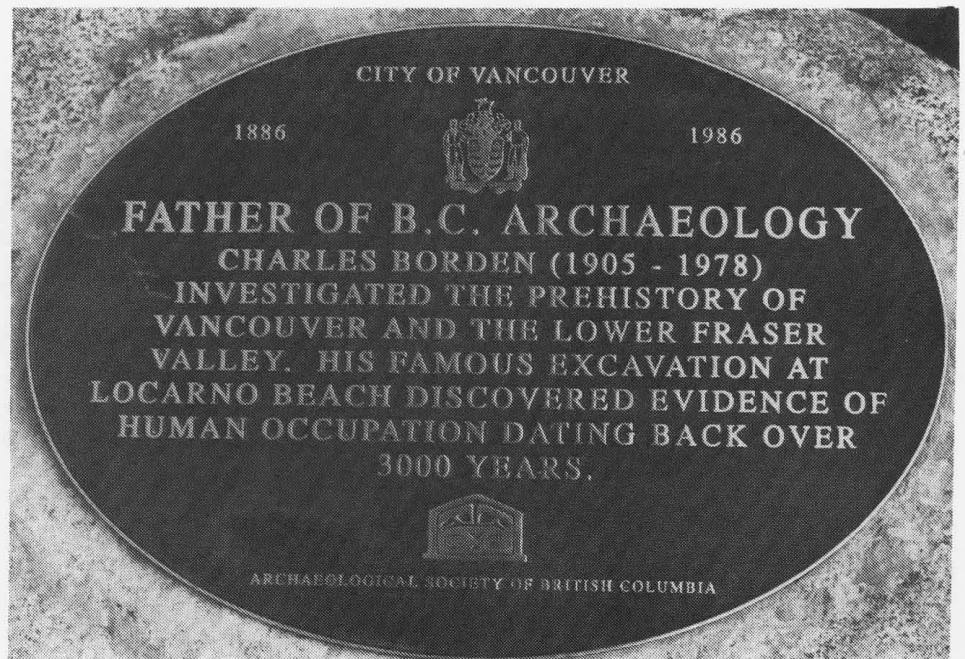
- **Hatzic.** UBC's field school taught by David Pokotylo joins a Sto:lo Tribal Council team directed by Gordon Mohs in excavating the 4500-year-old buried pit house site (*DgRn 23*) on a low terrace overlooking Hatzic Lake. A public interpretation program coordinated by Margaret Holm will conduct tours on weekdays between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm, from June 3 through July 31. There will also be two special weekend programs — phone Joyce Johnson at 822-2567 for dates and times.

**Directions:** From Mission, drive east on the Lougheed Hwy. Turn north onto Dewdney Trunk Road, then east (right) onto Sunnyside Drive. Continue to the end of Sunnyside Drive. Park. Follow dirt road to excavations.

- **Galiano Island.** Norm Easton (Yukon College) returns for a second season of investigations in the intertidal and submarine zones at Montague Harbour. Visitors welcome 7 days a week, August 3-25. Look for the volunteer crew on the beach near the park information board at Montague Harbour Marine Park.

## See the New Plaque...

- **Locarno Beach.** The original version was one of 100 heritage markers put up by the city of Vancouver to celebrate the 1986 centennial year. The ASBC recently replaced it with a more durable bronze plaque.



*T. Spurgeon photo.*

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